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Nix Kennedy schlock

DALLAS IS ALWAYS ON THE lookout for new business organizations to boost the economy but the city does not need the kind of enterprise proposed by a group that wants to make money out of promoting conspiracy theories in connection with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

While it is perfectly legal for promoters to open a JFK Assassination Information Center, it would be a ghoulish sideshow. Dallas already has an excellent historical exhibit, The Sixth Floor, which provides factual information about the 1963 tragedy and puts the event into perspective. The exhibit is located on the sixth floor of the former Texas School Book Depository Building, from which Lee Harvey Oswald allegedly fired the shots that killed the president and wounded John Connally, who was then governor of Texas.

The Sixth Floor exhibit includes some details of various conspiracy theories, as it should. However, those planning the assassination center apparently will emphasize the Oswald-did-not-act-alone notion to such an extent the limits of taste may well be breached. It would be affiliated with the Assassination Archives and Research Center in Washington, D.C., and would offer books, videos and documents to writers and researchers.

The information center, to be located in the West End MarketPlace, would not only offer information but would also conduct bus tours of the assassination sites and sell books and mementos. One souvenir to be offered tourists would be a replica of the bullet investigators believe wounded both Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Connally. The idea of such a "memento" is repugnant.

Another group operated an assassination museum for a time near the former school book depository, but it never drew much attention. We can only hope that the proposed new center will be forgotten. We do not need JFK schlock competing for tourists' attention with the other attractions of the West End MarketPlace — T-shirt shops, a fudge factory, carnival games and specialty stores.